

W. India

American Friends Board of
Mission.

FRIENDS IN JAMAICA





FRIENDS IN JAMAICA

AMERICAN FRIENDS BOARD OF MISSIONS

101 South Eighth Street
RICHMOND, INDIANA

1931

Sail forth—steer for the deep waters only,
Reckless O soul, exploring, I with thee, and thou with me,
For we are bound where mariner has not yet dared to go,
And we will risk the ship, ourselves and all.

O my brave soul!
O farther, farther sail!
O daring joy, but safe! are they not all the seas of God?
O farther, farther, farther sail!

WALT WHITMAN.

FRIENDS IN JAMAICA

A beautiful tropical gem pushed up out of the Caribbean Sea is the little Island known by the name Jamaica. For miles along its tortuous sea-worn coast may be found the graceful cocoanut palms waving their feathery fronds against the exquisitely beautiful sky. In places the mountains stand forth, their every ridge and valley and rock-scarred flank made distinct by the clear soft atmosphere. Up and down the hillsides grow the luxuriant banana and other tropical verdure.

In the olden days, the primitive Indian lived his simple life amid the shaggy mountains and sequestered valleys. Then came those early seekers after gold and a route to the romantic land of Cathay. For a time, the Island was held by Spain. Pirates, buccaneers, and sea rovers knew its secret inlets and rock-bound bays. These free-booter days with their lust for gold and gain, lasted until long after the English under Admiral Penn and Captain Venable captured the Island from Spain and made it a part of the King's possessions.



An East Indian Laborer.

FRIENDS IN JAMAICA

Slaves from Africa were brought to do the hard plantation tasks for the settlers who found the carefree life in the tropics more to their liking than that in the more conventional motherland. With the growth of the public conscience regarding slavery and the resultant freeing of Negroes, these settlers were confronted with the necessity of securing cheap labor from another source. They turned to the land of India and imported several thousand people who were bound to work on one estate for a few years after which they were free to do as they pleased. Thus there were introduced into this little Island, three distinct groups of people who have had to learn to live and work together.

Even in the days of George Fox, Friends were attracted to Jamaica; and, at one time, there was apparently a large group of Friends living there. They were scattered, however, and the Island was virgin soil to Friends when, in 1881, Evi Sharpless, under a sense of spiritual concern and with the sympathetic cooperation of Iowa Friends, journeyed to Jamaica in company with William Marshall. He spent some time visiting among the mission stations already established by the denominations at work in the Island. In 1883 he visited in the Cedar Valley neighborhood and found the people very responsive and eager to receive instruction. A part of a huge coffee house was secured from the owner for use as a meeting house and home for Evi Sharpless. Soon a Bible school, meeting for worship, and candidates' class were organized. Later the mission station opened there was named Glen Haven. Gilbert and Anna M. Farr served at this station for some years.

FRIENDS IN JAMAICA

Seaside Founded

Early in 1883 Evi Sharpless visited Hector's River at the east end of the Island and walked through the village one Sunday morning, inviting the people to attend meeting. A congregation of aged men and women, young people and children eagerly entered into the service. At the close they plead with the minister to open a mission among them. At Amity Hall, five miles from Hector's River, another center of religious activity was established.

As more workers and funds were needed, Evi Sharpless returned to the States in May, 1885, to lay his needs before Friends. Timothy Hussey of New England rather jokingly told him that if he would raise the money for a chapel he would go to Jamaica to supervise its erection. Later in the year, Evi Sharpless called upon him to fulfill his promise.

"The returning mission party brought with them from Boston a ready-made chapel thirty-two by fifty, and a



Chapel at Seaside.

FRIENDS IN JAMAICA

mission cottage twelve by sixteen, with some articles of furniture. They landed at Port Antonio and shipped by small boats twenty-six miles down the coast. The next difficulty was to secure land for the new mission. James Duffas, who had possession of the land along the coast where it was desired to erect the building, had previously declared that he would never give the 'Quakers' a foothold. In the face of this the buildings were landed. One evening after Evi Sharpless had lain down in his accustomed sleeping place, the Lord gave him the assurance that if he would arise next morning with the first sign of dawn and call on the owner for the land, he would give him a clear title for one acre for a building site. The land having been measured off on the desired spot and the deed recorded, everything was ready for the new buildings. To oversee the native workmen in the erection of these buildings was the work of Timothy B. Hussey, who managed it with grace and energy, teaching the people the much needed lessons of honesty and accuracy. On the last day of the year 1885, the chapel was dedicated, clear of debt, on land owned by Friends. It has since been known as Seaside."

In 1887 at the close of five years of intensive work, Evi Sharpless felt that his mission was fulfilled. He proved himself a faithful and untiring blazer of trails and left many open doors of service for those who were to succeed him.

In 1889 Arthur H. Swift, a New England young Friend, visited Jamaica. He saw the need for workers in the Amity Hall and Seaside area, and for two years after his return to his home in the States, he carried in his mind an urgent call to return to Jamaica. In 1891 the way opened for him to enter Jamaica and he began what proved to be a most fruitful service among the people.

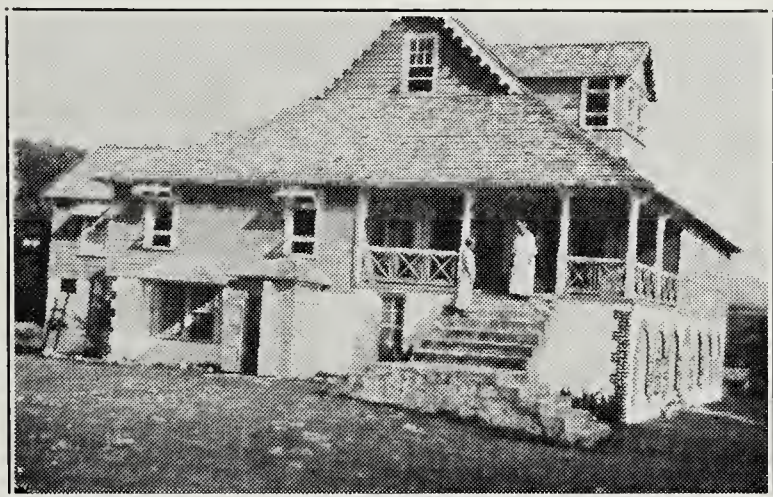
FRIENDS IN JAMAICA

He was chosen to teach school at Seaside and to preach at Amity Hall on Sunday. On Christmas Day, 1894, he was married to H. Alma Penrose, who had been sent out by the Women's Foreign Missionary Society of Iowa Yearly Meeting to work among the East Indians in the Amity Hall region.

Girls' and Boys' Schools

In 1891 the Happy Grove Estate was offered for sale and Captain L. D. Baker of the United Fruit Company advanced \$2,100 with which to purchase the 150-acre estate. Within three years from the time of purchase Iowa Yearly Meeting had paid out the loan made by Captain Baker. An old but substantial building stood on this property. It was finally decided to remodel the building and use it as a training home for East Indian and Jamaican girls. The home was opened May 5, 1898 with Alsina M. Andrews as matron.

Friends soon realized the need for a school for boys, and Milton Kenworthy and wife of Iowa Yearly Meeting opened a school at Worcester Place in 1901. They began the school with three boys, one of whom was Montclair



Andrew's Hall.

FRIENDS IN JAMAICA

Hoffman, the present headmaster of the Happy Grove School. In 1909, "after seven years of labor and prayer, Seaside stone chapel was dedicated free of debt." It was then decided to use the basement for the Happy Grove Boys School.

In the Amity Hall region and along the north coast of the Island a large number of East Indians were employed by the Fruit Companies to care for the banana fields and cocoanut groves. The spiritual destitution among these people early appealed to Friends workers and Mary White, Sada F. Stanley, Alice I. Kennedy, Lora P. Arms and others have devoted much time and energy to the establishing of schools and meetings among these people. An orphanage for East Indian girls was opened at Happy Grove Girls School and placed in charge of Mary E. Allen. When it was decided to make Happy Grove a secondary school, it seemed best to establish a separate home for these girls. The orphanage was removed to Highgate and named the Lyndale Home.

Iowa Yearly Meeting in 1905 decided to share its splendid work in Jamaica with the American Friends Board of Missions.

There is not space in this pamphlet to name over all of the Friends who have rendered a beautiful and constructive service in behalf of the Jamaican and East Indian people. They laid a solid foundation upon which the present work rests.

In Banana Land

The part of Jamaica in which Friends are at work is given over largely to the cultivation of fruit. More than 20,000,000 stems of bananas have been exported in one year; and millions of cocoanuts are grown each twelve

FRIENDS IN JAMAICA

months. Some coffee, cocoa, grapefruit, oranges, and other tropical products are marketed.

In some parts of the Island, the Jamaican and East Indians own small holdings; but for the most part, the land is held in large estates by the fruit companies and Englishmen. Land settlement schemes have been suggested and a few estates have been subdivided. Some of the estate owners lease small plots of land to the people.



Jamaican Market.

The work on the estates is done by Jamaicans and East Indians. During the winter months there is slight demand for bananas and cocoanuts. Two results follow: first, the price paid for fruit is extremely low. Perfect stems of bananas often sell at thirty-seven cents each during December, January and February. Cocoanuts bring a cent and a quarter and a cent and a half apiece. Second, work is scarce. The estate owners get along with a minimum number of laborers and many people are unemployed. A good deal of work is done by the piece. The

FRIENDS IN JAMAICA

average wage paid to the women who break stone for use on the roads, cut grass and weeds in the banana walks (fields), or pick copra, is 18 cents a day. Men receive from fifty to seventy-five cents a day depending upon the kind of work in which they are engaged. In the summer months, bananas may bring a better price; and the demand for labor increases.

As a result of the ability of only a few to secure land and the low wages paid, many of the people are forced to live in the midst of conditions which are not conducive to social, intellectual, and spiritual achievements.

Things That Blight Life

The problem of color is not nearly so perplexing in Jamaica as in the United States, but the class system does prevail. At the top is a small class of land owners, professional men, and Government officials. Most of the people in this class are English. Friends work is done largely among the peasant folk, but the middle and upper classes are touched to some extent by the mission and the church.

One of the worst social evils in the Island is illegitimacy. Many of the peasants do not marry. Weddings are expensive; and, in case of incompatibility of temperament, it is easier to separate if no legal marriage has taken place. As a result of this practice, thousands of children are illegitimate. Many fathers feel no sense of responsibility for their offspring and leave their care to the mother, nature, or some philanthropic organization. The problem of child welfare is concerning an increasing, though as yet small group of people; and the day will probably come when an attempt will be made to pass laws compelling the father to provide for the support of his children.

FRIENDS IN JAMAICA

Another social evil is the modern movie films which are sent to Jamaica. While not all of the films shown are of the baser sort, many of them are. Lurid pictures of a by-gone wild-west life, shooting scrapes, the breakdown of the family and home life, debasing love affairs, are flaunted before the eyes of the people. In Kingston the films are shown one or two nights a week. Sunday evening is a very popular time for the movies, and multitudes attend.

Gambling has also had its effect upon the life of the people. Peakapow and drop pan, two Chinese games, have attracted many men and taken from them their meagre earnings. A drastic anti-gambling law has been enacted, which, if impartially enforced, will do much to rid the Island of this evil. The liquor evil contributes to the social instability of the Island. Rum shops under Government license are to be found in every community.

Training the Mind

The Government appropriates some 150,000 pounds a year for education. In all parts of the Island are to be found small Government school houses where children are admitted until they are fifteen years old, when, because of crowded conditions, they are compelled to leave school. A few day schools are under mission care. Most of the secondary school work is done by the mission bodies in Jamaica. As the elementary school does not lead into the secondary school, many who wish to graduate from the secondary school enter at an early age in order to lay the foundation for the work required in the upper branches.

A few teacher training schools are operated by the Government but they are not large enough to meet fully

FRIENDS IN JAMAICA

the demand for well-trained teachers. In Kingston, there is one trade school where manual training, iron work, nursing, cooking, sewing, etc., are offered.

Religious Conditions

The Anglican church has by far the largest outlay in buildings, ministers, and money. The English Baptists, Presbyterians, and Wesleyan Methodists are strong bodies. The Catholic church is at work, but is relatively unimportant. Several other small bodies have representatives in different parts of the Island. On Saturday, one can find in the Kingston daily papers three or four entire columns of church notices for that city alone.

Religious leaders are frank to admit that Jamaica has too many denominations. In many places there is wasteful and confusing overlapping. In Kingston there is some effort on the part of several of the denominations to cooperate along a few lines. But outside of Kingston, little is being done to bind the various denominations into any sort of federated group with a common purpose and task.

Some of the people stress the externals of religion such as vestments, baptism, communion, and reciting creedal statements. Friends are frequently told by their neighbors that they are not a denomination because they do not observe the outward ordinances, and many say that Friends will be lost because they have not been baptized in water. In some places Friends are urged to keep Saturday as the Sabbath day if they want to be Christians and go to heaven. There are also wandering preachers who stir up the flames of ranterism.

All of these religious cross currents which are blowing across the lives of the Jamaican people make one pro-

FRIENDS IN JAMAICA

foundly grateful for religious groups that place the emphasis on the inwardness of religion and the daily walking in the Spirit, teaching, and power of Christ.

The Lyndale Home for Girls

The Lyndale Home for Girls, under the care of Sada F. Stanley, is located on a ridge some twelve miles from the coast. The Highgate railway station is perhaps an eighth of a mile away. The altitude makes the location quite healthful. Half or full orphans are admitted to the Home. About two-thirds of them are East Indian girls. At present (1931) there are some fifty girls in the Home, ranging in age from three to sixteen years.

The tiny ones play around the yard and Home while the older ones have regular household duties in addition to their daily school work. The girls learn sewing, cooking, washing, ironing, bed making, and the general care



Group of Lyndale Girls.

FRIENDS IN JAMAICA

of the home. A good deal of attention is given to their religious training. Every morning and evening they recite Scripture, sing hymns, and have prayer together. On Sunday they go to the Highgate meeting house for worship and Bible school. Every girl who has gone from the Home has been a professing Christian with a simple yet clear understanding of Christianity as the way of life.



Finding Life's Trail.

Glenleigh Home for Boys

At Glenleigh is the Swift's Industrial Home and School for Boys. This institution came into being at Buff Bay in 1919 as a result of an influenza epidemic which left many little children without parents or home. Alma Swift could not sit idly by and see so much human need, and so she opened her home to a few boys. Gradually the number grew until there were twenty-nine East Indian and Jamaican boys. Most of the boys are in the day school. A few attend Happy Grove School, and some of the older ones learn trades.

A good deal of emphasis is placed on Bible memory work and the boys give evidence of having lived in close contact with a very simple, practical Christianity. In the

FRIENDS IN JAMAICA



Glenleigh Boys at Play.

summer of 1928, a ten acre tract of banana land with a good house on it, located some two miles from Highgate, was purchased for the Swift Boys Home, and Paul and Margaret H. Michener were placed in charge. In a new and larger environment, where they have more opportunity for physical culture and spiritual nurture, the Home will be an increasing factor for good in the redemption of Jamaica's boyhood and manhood.

Friendly Schools

Friends have an interest in the day schools at Highgate, Albany, Orange Bay, Trinity, Orange Hill, Spicy Grove, Cedar Hurst, and Amity Hall. All of these schools, except the infant school at Albany, the Highgate school, and the Trinity school, receive regular Government grants.

The Continuation School at Highgate is a new venture

FRIENDS IN JAMAICA

in education. There are only two or three such schools in the Island. Lora P. Arms founded it in October, 1925. The purpose of the school is to give to girls who are past elementary school age the privilege of continuing their education and to study under Christian influences for the Government Pupil Teacher Examinations which permit them to become teachers; to give a broader English



Highgate Continuation School.

and literary course than is possible in an elementary school to girls who are unable to attend a secondary school; to offer to girls who are not capable of preparing for the Teachers' Examinations an opportunity to receive practical training along domestic science lines.

The school started with an enrollment of eight. More than thirty are now enrolled. The Government grant, which was at first sixty pounds per annum, has been substantially increased and a new school building was erected in 1930.

At Seaside, overlooking the beautiful Caribbean, Friends are conducting a secondary school for boys and girls. The former live in Harvey and Buxton Halls, and

FRIENDS IN JAMAICA

the latter reside in Andrews Hall. Harvey Hall is a substantial, poured-concrete, three-story building. The library and office occupy the first floor; the study hall and dining room, the middle story; and the boys' dormitory the top floor. Buxton Hall is an old building constructed of wood. Andrews Hall is a substantial building erected nearly two hundred years ago. It underwent a remodelling in 1925 which made of it a more useful and attractive home.



Buxton and Harvey Halls.

The life of the pupils is wholesome, normal, and permeated with a fine religious spirit. Montclair Hoffman truthfully reports that "there have been many encouraging features in the Christian life of our pupils, the spirit of unselfishness and service has been evident, and we have observed an earnest effort toward Christian ideals in daily life." The pupils meet in Andrews Hall every Sunday evening for their own Christian Endeavor meeting. They meet with the people of the community for Bible school and worship.

Friends Meetings

There are eleven monthly meetings and two congregations of Jamaican Friends. There is space for but a

FRIENDS IN JAMAICA

brief word about a few of these meetings. Highgate monthly meeting is made up largely of East Indians. Several of these members are prosperous fruit growers, traders, and merchants. All of the Lyndale Home girls attend the meeting for worship and Bible school and those who are old enough are active members of the monthly meeting. Alice Kennedy has helped in the pastoral care of this and two other meetings.

One of the most remarkable meetings in the Island is at Prospect, a part of Port Antonio. Years ago, the Prospect area was a malarial swamp. Later it was filled in to a depth of from eighteen inches to two feet, and the poorer people began moving in. Rum shops were opened; and brawling, quarreling, killing, stealing, gambling, and other hideous sins were openly and constantly practiced. Several years ago, Jesus Christ invaded this neighborhood through Mary E. White. As a result, there is a well-organized monthly meeting, a chapel which has been en-



Mary E. White and H. Alma Swift.

FRIENDS IN JAMAICA

larged twice, a Bible school, Christian Endeavor Society and a mid-week prayer meeting. Most of the members are poor, illiterate peasants; but they tell a fascinating story of transformed lives.

At West, a few miles from Prospect, is a most unique work among the East Indians. The members have a small but adequate meeting house where they gather to worship and receive religious instruction.

Seaside is by far the largest and most advanced meeting in the group of Friends meetings. It has a long history and is made up of many dependable members who have grown in a sense of responsibility for the work. The Sunday School is departmentalized and graded. A splendid Christian Endeavor Society meets each week with an attendance that often runs close to one hundred.

The Spirit of Evangelism

As the evangelistic spirit of Jamaica Friends is not confined to any one meeting, it should be referred to separately. The church as a whole has a very intimate and personal knowledge of Christ. Many of the members tell of how He came into their lives to free them from drinking, smoking, adultery, gambling, stealing, quarreling, and other sins which are so prevalent. Men and women speak of an inward daily communion and a spiritual baptism. The Bible is known and valued as a book of life. The outward lives of many are being lived in conformity to the inward experiences to which they make confession. The church is fearless, tactful, and persistent in witnessing by life and word before the people. As the women go to the streams to do their laundry, they talk with their neighbors about Christ. The men in the fields tell their companions of their Christian ex-

FRIENDS IN JAMAICA

perience. In many homes, daily Bible reading and family prayer are faithfully observed. When the gambling evil was at its height representatives of the mission and the monthly meetings went to Kingston to plead with the Acting Governor for a stricter anti-gambling law. At the close of the interview, Montclair E. Hoffman, one of the representatives, asked for the privilege of praying. This was granted gladly, and all sat in reverent waiting while Montclair prayed for the uplift of his people and for the Government that rules over them.



A Younger Friend.

For many years the mission was officially responsible for the evangelistic work of Friends in Jamaica. But in 1928, a Central Evangelistic Board was appointed by the Annual Conference upon the approval of the monthly meetings. The ministers and teachers look to this body for guidance and help in all cooperative evangelistic effort and in the care of the meetings. Thus, the responsibility for the initiation and care of all evangelistic work has been transferred from the mission to the Jamaican church.

The Grace of Giving

Jamaica Friends have made notable gains in the recognition and discharge of their stewardship of material

FRIENDS IN JAMAICA

things. In the beginning of the work, American Friends contributed the major part of the funds used. A few years ago a Central Finance Board was created to take over the raising of funds for the cooperative work of the churches and for the support of some teachers. In addition, the Finance Board provides funds for some building projects. The money used by the Finance Board is paid in voluntarily by the meetings. The Mission Board contributes a diminishing sum each year to this department of work. Several Friends tithe their income and give regularly from week to week.

What of the Future?

Jamaica Friends are quick to realize that they are not perfect. They feel the need for a more adequately trained leadership. The ministry needs more education; and there is an urgent demand for better qualified Bible school teachers, Christian Endeavor leaders, and monthly meeting officials. In the matter of self-government, real progress is being made; and with careful training, it will not be many years until Jamaica Friends will be asking for the establishing of a Yearly Meeting.

The members of the mission hold membership in some of the monthly meetings and identify themselves with the church at many points. They are real friends of the people and work with and not over their fellow Christians. As counselors, cooperators, and Christian statesmen, they will be needed for years to come. The seed that they and, through them, Friends at home have scattered is springing up and bearing fruit in transformed lives, recreated communities, and purged social and economic conditions.

FRIENDS IN JAMAICA

Workers in Jamaica

Evi Sharpless	1881-1887
Jesse Townsend	1883-1887
Elizabeth Townsend	1883-1887
John C. Hiatt	1886-1887
Esther A. Hiatt	1886-1887
Josiah Dillon	1887-1889
William E. Green	1886-1888
*Naomi George	1888-1893
Mary Dillon	1888-(?)
Jesse C. George	1889-(?)
*Arthur H. Swift	1889-1909
Gilbert L. Farr	1891-1903
Helen M. Farr	1892-1913
Arthur B. Farr	1892-1897
Anna M. Farr	1892-1903
H. Alma Swift	1893-
Georgie Griffith	1895-1900
Rufus Garrett	1895-1895
Mary E. White	1895-
*Sarah B. Andrews	1896-1898
Charles White	1897-1898
Nellie White	1897-1898
Gertrude Marriage	1897-1900
Alsina M. Andrews	1897-
Florence Baker	1899-1902
Sada F. Stanley	1900-
Mary E. Allen	1900-1922

FRIENDS IN JAMAICA

Milton Kenworthy	1901-1903
Neita Kenworthy	1901-1903
Jefferson W. Ford	1901-1913
Leah Scoltock	1903-1910
Alice I. Kennedy	1903-
Albert Courtney	1903-1905
Ola Courtney	1903-1905
Elam Henderson	1909-1910
Elda Henderson	1909-1910
Anna C. Sherman	1911-1913
Eva H. Allen	1912-1913
Wendell G. Farr	1912-1918
Faye F. Farr	1914-1918
Jennie M. Hoover	1914-1929
Lora P. Arms	1915-
Milo S. Hinckle	1917-1922
Addie M. Hinckle	1917-1922
Gladys Smith	1918-1923
Lillian E. Hayes	1921-1922
Milo S. Hinckle	1924-1925
Addie M. Hickie	1924-1925
*Jessie L. Hoover	1925-1927
†Alta Hoover	1925-
H. Paul Michener	1928-
Margaret H. Michener	1928-
Florence M. Smith	1928-

*Died on field.

†Volunteer worker.

